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NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, New York
August 25, 1962

Tumor Test on Mice

Less Tar Found In Filter Smokes

Chemically, the smoke tar from a filter cigarette is as dangerous a tumor-causing agent as that from non-filtered cigarettes, a team of researchers reported in the Journal of American Medical Association yesterday.

But puff for puff, filter cigarettes deliver less tar than non-filtered types. Thus, though the tar is qualitatively no different, a smoker using filters receives less of it in the same manner as he would if he smoked fewer cigarettes.

This is the gist of the implications in a new report on the effect of smoke tars from both filter and non-filter cigarettes on the skin of mice. The report was prepared by a team of scientists from the Roswell Paris Memorial Institute, Buffalo.

The Task

The scientists—Dr. Fred G. Bock, Dr. George E. Moore, Dr. John E. Dowd and Paul C. Clark—set out to determine whether filter tips made cigarettes any safer than they are without filters.

Since it is impossible to conduct a quick or controlled experiment with man, the scientists worked with mice. And since science as yet has been unable to teach a mouse how to smoke like men, the scientists mechanically smoked the cigarettes and then painted the resulting tars on the shaved skin of the mice.

They painted some of the mice with tars from four standard brands of cigarettes. Others were painted with tars from filter-tip cigarettes. Still others were painted with just the solvent used to carry the tars and additional mice were left unpainted but in an otherwise similar environment.

Both the mice painted with filtered cigarette tars and those painted with tar from standard brands developed skin tumors and cancers.

One-Third Less

The study established that filter-tip brands produce one-third less tar per cigarette.

The mice in the study were painted with the tar from 8.3 cigarettes a day. Thus the mice painted with filtered smoke tar received less tar each day. Consequently, fewer such mice developed skin tumors.

In the filter-tip group, 15 out of 60 mice developed tumors. In the standard brand group, 41 out of 76 mice suffered. Some mice in each group suffered tumors which progressed to cancers within a year. In other words, the filtered smoke tars were no less tumor-causing than the non-filtered. It was only the difference in the amount of tars that caused a difference in tumor rates.

Ideal Course: Stop

In a sense, the scientists pointed out that filter tips have the same effect as a cut-down in smoking, which they said helps prevent lung cancer. However, they said, "the ideal course would be to stop smoking altogether."

In New York, T. V. Hartnett, chairman of the Tobacco Industry Research Committee, issued a rejoinder.

"It is apparent that animal skin painting is not directly relevant to the problem of human cancer, particularly lung cancer," he said. "More to the point is this fact—human type lung cancer has never been produced in animals as a result of having them inhale tobacco smoke throughout their lifetimes."

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NEWSWEEK
September 3, 1962

Filter Tip

In cigarettes—it may be what's in back that finally counts.

Researchers at Buffalo's Roswell Park Memorial Institute reported last week that filters may help smokers simply by reducing the amount of smoke inhaled. The Buffalo scientists extracted tars from four brands of unfiltered and two brands of filtered cigarettes and applied them repeatedly to the skin of mice. The filter cigarettes, the doctors report in the current Journal of the American Medical Association, produced a third less tar than did the regular cigarettes—and a proportionately fewer skin tumors.

Within a year, 41 of the 76 mice treated with unfiltered tar had tumors; similar growths affected only fifteen of 60 painted with tars from filter tips.

"Regardless of whether filters selectively remove carcinogens [cancer causing agents]," said Dr. George E. Moore, head of the research team, "these findings suggest that reducing the dose of smoke inhaled will offer some degree of protection." But the ideal protection, insists Dr. Moore, a non-smoker, "would be to stop smoking altogether."

TIME
August 31, 1962

Filters & Cancer

Do filter tips really work? Yes, reported an eminent cancer researcher in last week's A.M.A. *Journal*. They make smoking safer—up to a point.

Dr. George E. Moore's research team at Buffalo's Roswell Park Memorial Institute tested six brands of cigarettes, four plain and two filtered, by "smoking" them in a machine and collecting the tar. The tar yields from plain cigarettes differed by less than 20%, but the filtered brands yielded 67% less than the unfiltered average. Of 76 mice painted with tar from "straights," 41 developed tumors, and 16 of these turned to cancer; of 60 mice treated with the tar from the same number of filter tips, 15 got tumors, of which three became cancerous.

The evidence that filters reduce the risk of lung cancer is "indirect but meaningful," say Dr. Moore and colleagues. Among smokers, men who smoke fewer cigarettes have a lower incidence of cancer; so, presumably, will those who filter the smoke and thus cut down the amount of tar they draw into their lungs.

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